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R
THALIA to ELIZA:

A POETICAL EPISTLE

FROM

THE COMIC MUSE

TO

The COUNTESS of D—.

IN WHICH

VARIOUS EMINENT

DRAMATIC AND POLITICAL CHARACTERS

ARE DISPLAYED.

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THALIA & ELIA

A FORTNIGHTLY EPIC

FROM

THE COMIC MUSE

BY C. D. D.



AT THE

DR. HARRIS AND PUBLISHED BY C. D. D.

ARE DISPLAYED

—————

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THALIA TO ELIZA:

A

POETICAL EPISTLE.

MIDST the gay scenes, that wealth and rank display,
Pleasure's bright gleam, and Fortune's golden day,
Titled ELIZA, will you deign to cast
One retrospective glance on trials past?
Once more review what early sufferings taught? 5
Pupil of Poverty, 'tis worth a thought.

THERE was a time, when at THALIA's name
Your young ambition kindled into flame;
That flame extinguish'd, will you now refuse
A vacant hour to the once-honour'd Muse? 10
Will you, because you need her aid no more,
Dismiss your benefactress from your door?
Perish the thought! Let upstart pride forget,
You have not learnt that courtly lesson yet;

B 2

No,

No, tho' the Ghost of YOUNGER could awake, 15
And this his awful deposition make—

“ Fond, foolish Muse, forbear to hope that she
“ Will give you welcome, who excluded me.”
Strong in belief, indignant I would say,
“ 'Tis false ! prevaricating Shade, away ! ” 20

THE Man I knew, and pour'd into his heart
No mighty portion of my scenic art,
No changeful tones, no comic powers of face,
No tuneful ear, and not one tragic grace ;
But Nature with benevolence endow'd 25
His soul, and better attributes bestow'd.
What, tho' my stage with step uncouth he trode ;
Upright he walk'd in presence of his God ;
Heav'n's humble almoner, his bounty fed
Heav'n's hungry creatures, when they su'd for bread ;
And you, ELIZA, you can witness bear, 31
If he refus'd to hear the Widow's pray'r,
When in each hand a suppliant she bore,
And houseless genius shiver'd at his door.
Here, whilst her suit the mournful Mother prest,
The chords of mercy tingled in his breast ; 36
He heard the tale ; on all, but chief on you,
He look'd, nor doubted if the tale were true ;
Sad was your air, no token then betray'd
The embrio Countess in the vagrant maid ; 40
Enough for him that pity made the plea,
He ask'd no more, but left the rest to me.

'Twas

'Twas then I took, and on his nursing stage
 Foster'd the future darling of the age :
 He sooth'd your sorrows, I attun'd your voice, 45
 In him 'twas charity, in me 'twas choice.
 As yet your patron, doubtful of your strength,
 Assign'd no character of weight or length,
 Cull'd out some pleasing, not important part,
 And train'd you in the grammar of your art : 50
 Their young ROSETTA all conspir'd to chear,
 Simple the song, but candour deign'd to hear ;
 For 'twas a promise, 'twas a bud unblown,
 A dawning beauty half-conceal'd, half-shewn :
 But when 'twas found with what increasing pace 55
 You pass'd your rivals in Fame's eager race ;
 When they beheld you picture to the life
 The courtly airs of TOWNLY'S MODISH WIFE,
 When MERSEY'S shores were taught ELIZA'S name,
 And counting-houses echo'd to your fame, 60
 The sons of commerce knew the time was near
 When star so bright would seek a prouder sphere :
 And rightly they divin'd, for now the day
 Comes sadly on that summons you away ;
 The fatal bill proclaims your last adieu, 65
 The house o'erflows, all eyes are fix'd on you ;
 The play is o'er, and now advancing slow
 In all the mock similitude of woe,
 Curtsyng, you drop the well-dissembled tear,
 Whilst the loud plaudit vibrates in your ear ; 70
 The curtain falls ; the pensive crowd retires ;
 Them sorrow freezes, you ambition fires.

NEXT morn behold ! with the first peep of day
 The coach attends, the driver warns away :
 The love-struck trader, hurrying to the call, 75
 Bears the one box, that holds your little all ;
 Up the steep ladder as you climb, he eyes
 Your sweet confusion, and soft-sighing cries—
 “ Tho’ soon, too soon, far distant we shall be, 79
 “ Oh ! ’give one thought to LIVERPOOL and me !”
 No more ; along the rattling streets you fly,
 Whilst the hoarse sailor roars—“ Sweet BETT, good bye !”

Now having chatted in the stage-coach stile
 With sister and mama o’er many a mile,
 Time, that by sure degrees, sets all things right, 85
 Brought the long wish’d-for Capital in sight :
 Not WHITTINGTON could warmer transport feel,
 When hail’d Lord May’r by the prophetic peal,
 Than you, when first you saw huge clouds arise,
 Rolling their footy incense to the skies : 90
 So while the sailor’s longing eyes explore
 From the mast’s lofty top his native shore,
 Tho’ fog and vapour veil the turbid air,
 He knows the haven of his hope is there.
 Now with accelerated speed you sweep 95
 And slacken’d traces down the impending steep ;
 Swift to your inn your rattling course you hold,
 Your inn, whose very cross was cas’d with gold,
 Auspicious omen ! Then with anxious eye 99
 On YOUNGER bent and trembling voice you cry—
 “ Where,

" Where, Sir, oh where shall I find powers to please,

" And courage to encounter crowds like these?"—

Nought he replied, for now the throng was great,

Gazing to see the coach discharge it's freight;

This to avoid the charitable man 105

March'd silent forth with baggage in the van:

The house appointed to receive his charge,

Was nothing sumptuous and not over-large;

A chamber two flights high, and over-head

A decent garret and a truckle bed. 110

HERE, while in sleep's soft arms entranc'd you lye,
Ideal forms your busy fancy ply;

I sent the dream—Low at your feet you see

A kneeling lover—Not much grac'd was he

In form or feature, but full richly stor'd 115

In gifts of fortune, and yclep'd My Lord:

Words at command and a persuasive tongue

He boasted not, nor was he over-young,

But in his hand he held a purse well lin'd—

" This shall be your's," he cried, " if you'll be kind."

Indignant virtue all your bosom fir'd— 121

" Avaunt!" you cried—the noble shade retir'd—

Short pause ensued, and now, with just disdain

Your heart high beating, see My Lord again—

A coronet he held, or seem'd to hold, 125

With silver balls and oaken leaves of gold;

Conscious, abash'd, he cries, " Oh maid divine,

" Be your's this prize, and let your hand be mine;

“ For soon as Heav’n permits, by Heav’n I vow
 “ This bridal toy shall glitter on your brow.” 130

MORE he had said, when YOUNGER at your door
 With voice Stentorian strait began to roar—

“ BETTY, awake! equip yourself to meet
 “ The little Manager in Suffolk street.”

Swift flies the dream, with sudden start you rise, 135
 Round the bare walls you cast your anxious eyes;
 No kneeling Lord, no coronet is there,
 ’Tis blank illusion all, and empty air.

YOUR simple toilette o’er, you hasten down
 In youthful bloom and beauty all your own— 140

“ Welcome, my girl! I like that modest dress,”

Your Patron cried, “ fair omen of success.”

Nor more, for whilst he fram’d his lips to speak,

The tear of joy bedew’d his manly cheek,

And in the mute expression of the heart 145

Said more, much more, than language can impart.

Now usher’d in by JEWEL’s courteous hand,

Before the master of your fate you stand;

Small was the lord, and not superb the house,

But woman’s fears can magnify a mouse: 150

YOUNGER meanwhile, collected and awake

To all the claims that merit ought to make,

Boldly advanc’d his plea, then paus’d, and stood

In full persuasion that his plea was good;

Deep

Deep in the councils of a mightier state, 155
 He knew to measure little kings by great.

THE most eccentric genius of the age
 By Royal Grant had rear'd a summer stage:
 FOOTE, wild as DRYDEN'S Zimri, SEEM'D TO BE
 NOT ONE, BUT ALL MANKIND'S EPITOME, 160
 And in the course of one short ev'ning there
 Was poet, mimic, mountebank, and player.
 A truant wit he was, expell'd my school
 For breaking bounds and spurning every rule;
 Nature he knew, yet laid aside her book, 165
 And a strange volume of chimæras took;
 Plot, probability, he held at nought,
 And only for extravagancies fought;
 His powers of face unrival'd, and his flow
 Of wit a torrent, whelming friend and foe; 170
 Too soon elated, and as soon depress'd,
 Now fought, now shun'd, here menac'd, there carefs'd:
 When want impell'd, or vanity inspir'd,
 His genius glitter'd, and his fancy fir'd;
 Then take him in his humour's happiest vein, 175
 " You ne'er will look upon his like again."

COLMAN now fill'd his feat, no pigmy name,
 If measur'd by the stature of his fame,
 And tho' sometimes, like FOOTE, with gibes and jests
 He aim'd to entertain his summer guests, 180
 An author of more solid parts was he,
 Learn'd, and right loyally attach'd to me;

Not

Not only had he grac'd his native stage,
 But pluck'd fresh laurels from a distant age,
 Giv'n my poor Punic bard a second home, 185
 And naturalized the slave of ancient Rome:
 Therefore it was, when in an evil day
 The jewel of his mind was snatch'd away,
 When his spent brain, in wild disorder tost,
 Was to himself, his friends, his country lost, 190
 His genius blasted in it's tow'ring flight,
 And soul enlighten'd plung'd in endless night,
 Pitying I saw my servant sunk so low
 In the last mournful state of human woe,
 Snatch'd his pale trophy from the hand of death, 195
 And on the Son bestow'd the Father's wreath.

AND may that SON improve with pious care,
 The laurel'd honours he is giv'n to wear!
 For 'tis a loan, a talent put to use,
 Which he must neither bury nor abuse; 200
 'Tis not the chaplet of voluptuous flowers,
 That deck'd ANACREON in his social hours;
 Nor rose nor ivy in that wreath he'll find,
 Nor the vine's wanton tendrils intertwin'd;
 No garland by the hands of Venus wove 205
 With myrtle gather'd from the Paphian grove;
 It is THALIA's gift, a sacred boon,
 Chaste as the circlet of the silver moon,
 A laurel pluck'd from the Parnassian mount,
 And three times dipt in the Pierian fount— 210

Guard

Guard it, my Son! by hands profane if torn,
 Each pointed fibre will become a thorn:
 Persist, and triumph! leave dull souls to sleep,
 Be your's the glorious toil to mount the steep,
 Till to that tow'ring citadel you rise, 215
 Where Fame presides, and SHAKESPEAR's banner flies.

ON you, ELIZA, and your gen'rous friend,
 Child of my love, once more my thoughts attend.
 In presence of the CHIEF with modest air,
 Graceful you stand; from his judicial chair 220
 O'er your fair form his critic eye he glanc'd,
 And saw how true what YOUNGER had advanc'd,
 But politic by stage-experience grown,
 Felt more conviction than he chose to own;
 Con'd o'er your list of parts, and search'd about 225
 For something there, on which to hang a doubt,
 Then cries, as LADY TOWNLY meets his view—
 “ Is this the Wife that VAN and COLLEY drew?
 “ And tell me, YOUNGER, tell me on your word,
 “ Was Miss my Lady, and were you my Lord? 230
 “ Oh well-pair'd couple, whence your nuptial strife,
 “ So fond a husband, and so fair a wife?
 “ And would you not, young Lady, dread the rage
 “ Of the defrauded matrons of our stage?
 “ Ravish from ABINGTON this well earnt prize, 235
 “ And I'll not underwrite those pretty eyes:
 “ Friend YOUNGER knows concessions of this kind
 “ Are not amongst the graces of her mind;

“ JOHN

" JOHN PALMER, little tho' he cares for fame,
 " Would huff and hector for his wedded dame; 240
 " She, who has beat all competition down,
 " Goddess of taste, the idol of the town,
 " Whom poets, politicians, peers combine
 " With me to worship as a thing divine,
 " Will she permit this little thief to come 245
 " And pick away her sweetmeats, plumb by plumb?
 " She, of whom CONGREVE, FARQUAR caught a gleam,
 " And VANBRUGH sketch'd in his prospective dream,
 " Whom FLETCHER, tho' long ages roll between,
 " Brought with his COPPER CAPTAIN on the scene,
 " (For sure her soul was ESTIFANIA's then, 251
 " And is by transmigration her's again)
 " Heav'ns, if you take her BEATRICE away,
 " What will great SHAKESPEAR's angry spirit say?
 " Therefore, as Nature will not give to her 255
 " Your youth, nor yet to you her powers transfer,
 " Be warn'd, fair candidate, and tempt no more
 " These daring flights, but creep ere you soar;
 " And doubt not but we'll find some tender part,
 " Soft, sentimental, stealing to the heart, 260
 " Such as JOHN HOME, or gentle HOOLE shall pen,
 " (HOOLE, if not first of bards, the best of men)
 " A part that neither makes nor mars the fame,
 " Provokes no praise, nor hazards any blame, 264
 " For those who aim too high friend YOUNGER knows,
 " If they shoot short, may chance to break their bows,
 " And 'twixt his stage and our's this difference lies,
 " His is the starting post, and our's the prize."

HE

He said, and conscious that by certain laws
 'Twas YOUNGER's turn to speak, here made a pause;
 But YOUNGER haply had no speech to make, 271
 And knew his friend had talk'd for talking sake,
 So after short debate on this and that,
 Part spent in chaffering and part in chat,
 The poet dealt his nose th' emphatic tweak, 275
 And sign'd your terms at so much by the week.

HERE, my ELIZA, let me speak apart
 A few plain words to Lady D——'s heart—
 Is there not something sweeter to the sense
 Than all the fumes that flattery can dispense; 280
 Something above what splendor can bestow,
 Or all the joys that selfish mortals know,
 In conscious gratitude? Should fickle Chance
 Depress the benefactor and advance
 The creature of his bounty, can you find 285
 A plea to justify a thankless mind?
 If in life's various journey having pass'd
 Darknefs and dangers, we emerge at last
 To light and safety, who but looks around,
 If haply some kind object may be found, 290
 Who in that dismal stage or lent us aid,
 Or sooth'd our sorrows, or our wants allay'd,
 Then with what rapture does the heart expand,
 If from the tow'ring heighth, on which we stand,
 We can look down, and grateful help bestow 295
 On him, who cheer'd us in the vale below!

PAUSE

PAUSE then, ELIZA, thus far in the shade
 Of gloomy want your painful track has laid,
 Wand'ring with needy strollers up and down, 299
 Whose wardrobe rags scarce patch'd you up a gown,
 Pacing with drum on back and scraps of scenes,
 (The luxury of a cart above your means)
 Then ask your heart, if in the swelling tide
 Of full prosperity you turn'd aside, 304
 And feign'd to have lost remembrance of a face,
 That beam'd on you with pity's angel grace,
 When with a widow'd mother, friendless, poor,
 You sought employment at his bounteous door—
 It cannot be—the soul that can bestow
 On generous sentiments so bright a glow, 310
 Would even in the fiction of a scene
 Disdain to act a character so mean;
 Such contradiction never could accord
 With LADY RUBY's language to My Lord :
 In you a solecism so direct 315
 Both poet and spectators would detect,
 And cry, " She's playing CHARLOTTE RUSPORT's
 part
 " With all MY LADY's cruelty at heart."

No, not in one of all the Thespian race,
 Can malice mark ingratitude so base; 320
 Talents run wild, beneficence profuse,
 And wit by pleasures lur'd into abuse;
 These and a thousand foibles they may have,
 Which grieve the prudent and offend the grave,
 But

But pride attach'd to his own fordid ends, 325
 And feign'd forgetfulness of humble friends,
 Are crimes unnatural to my gallant train,
 And held from first to last in just disdain.

HAIL, friends of virtue, menders of mankind,
 Congenial inmates of the poet's mind, 330
 Nature's vicegerents, now ordain'd to roll
 The thundering tempest that tears up the soul,
 Now to soft pity man's hard heart to move,
 And melt him into harmony and love :
 To you the sorrow-loaded bosom owes 335
 A healing intermission from it's throes ;
 You are that warning monitor within
 The conscious breast, that checks the purpos'd sin ;
 You teach the lesson to the fordid elf,
 That tells him man was made for more than self ;
 That, prejudice apart, there's ample space 341
 In one large heart for all the human race ;
 How mere a wretch the slave to vengeance lives,
 And how sublime his triumph, who forgives ;
 You paint the dangerous influence of the time,
 And cast in horrors the seducer's crime ; 346
 Spread the dread scene before the gamester's eyes,
 Where roll'd in blood the self-destroyer lies,
 And to the mercenary parent show.
 How matches of compulsion lead to woe. 350
 Hail, friends of virtue ! once again I hail
 Your moral art, and could my verse avail,

The

The Nation's justice should redress your cause,
And own you for the assessors of it's laws.

WHAT is it, if, because your humour charms,
Society receives you in her arms? 356
In your domestic annals she may find
Actions to grace the best of human kind;
Mercy not only painted but possess'd,
And Charity the inmate of the breast. 360
Does PALMER, when he plays the tyrant's part,
Feel correspondent passions in his heart?
When RICHARD in the fight is overthrown,
Does KEMBLE's cruelty survive his crown?
Let AIKIN wipe those murd'rous streaks away,
Mark what philanthropy his looks display! 366

WHO then the wond'rous talents can define,
That in the perfect Actor must combine?
A miracle it is, that scarce appears
Once in the circle of a hundred years, 370
For by some sad fatality it seems
Nature and Art stand off at wide extremes;
Nature will claim man's genius for her own,
And Art will think her work can stand alone;
Nature 'tis true at pleasure can encase 375
A mighty spirit in a narrow space;
Heroes we've seen in most distorted shapes,
And poets something less like men than apes,
But ere the finish'd Actor we behold
Nature must first select her finest mould, 380
And

And when at length she has with hand divine
 Touch'd and retouch'd her exquisite design,
 With grace the form, with feeling stor'd the heart,
 The last bright polish must be giv'n by Art.
 But ere to this joint task the Dame accords, 385
 Her journeymen shall make a thousand lords.
 Such GARRICK was—of all her works supreme—
 Peace to the Dead!—the Living are my theme.

Now Expectation to the sultry stage 389
 Summons her throng to brave the dog-star's rage;
 So call'd, they come—from mortal fight conceal'd
 I follow'd, and prepar'd you for the field;
 Arm'd and accoutred by celestial hands,
 Aw'd, not oppress'd, the promis'd wonder stands;
 Loud was the plaudit, for 'twas I inspir'd 395
 Those conqu'ring eyes, that claim'd to be admir'd:
 The Graces circled round you, over head
 Bright Victory soar'd with eagle wings outspread,
 Your guardian Genius led the dancing Hours, 399
 And Fortune strew'd your path with golden flowers:
 This done, I fondly hop'd to fix my throne
 Firm in your heart, and there to reign alone:
 Not so—for now behold the tearful Queen
 With slow majestic step and tragic mien
 Proudly advanc'd; a cypress branch around 405
 Her pallid brow, tiara-like, was bound;
 YOUNG's well-trod buskin in her hand she bore,
 The flowing robe imperial YATES had wore,
 With BARRY's poison'd bowl and dagger dipt in gore, }

C

Such

Such as in that fam'd strife she seems to be, 410
Where by the painter's skill 'tis plain to see,
Duty directs to her, but love impels to me. }

A WHILE she triumph'd, for your little heart
Panted to play the FAIR CIRCASSIAN's part; 414
Glorious you deem'd it, when from JULIET's tomb
You wak'd to wail your dying ROMEO's doom;
Glorious to force th' unwilling tear to roll,
And melt the marble of the Critic's soul;
Glorious to rave and start and seem to tear 419
Those beauteous locks with phrensy and despair,
Then with a deep-drawn, last, expiring sigh,
Smooth your chaste robe, and elegantly die,

BUT soon beneath the mask distain'd with tears
The laughing eye of Comedy appears;
The buskin loose, unshackl'd from your feet 425
Falls off, and to the sock resigns it's seat:
From ABINGTON you catch the nameless grace,
And in her glass of fashion mould your face,
Her trick, her playfulness, her very tone,
Her every excellence becomes your own, 430
Seizes each sense and melts into your frame,
Fresh from the dye, another and the same.

WHAT joy now glow'd in honest YOUNGER's breast
Should, if my Muse could tell it, be express;
Whilst little COLMAN like a pocket Jove 435
Look'd on and smil'd upon the Queen of Love;
For

For well he knew by prescience divine
 That queen would bring much incense to his shrine ;
 And, for he spied his own in your success,
 We may presume he lik'd it none the less : 440
 Therefore the Bard no longer now was dumb,
 Nor answer'd only with a solemn hum,
 But loud and bold in judgment gave his tongue,
 Vowing 'twas wonderful in one so young.

OTHERS there were, and not a few, as kind,
 Smiling before the curtain and behind : 445
 Of these JOHN PALMER, a fair portly man,
 Smil'd like KING HARRY on his dainty ANNE,
 For JOHN can smile, tho' in his manly face
 Much dignity there is and princely grace, 450
 And high he towers above the puiſne hordes
 On two stout legs that shakes the trembling boards :
 Rich he is not—I wish he had the art
 To treat his sorrows as he treats his part,
 Never unfold the melancholy page, 455
 Till the last music warns him to the stage,
 So might he fairly put aside the evil,
 And like his DUNSTAN drive away the Devil :
 Yet tho' correctness never was his boast,
 PALMER alone is in himself a host ; 460
 Nature his guide, his teacher, and his friend,
 He scorns the task that industry can mend ;
 In his achievements drudgery has no share,
 He leaves his memory in the Prompter's care ;

Sees others tumble at the alter'd cue, 465
 But keeps his own firm march and dashes through;
 Vaults o'er the petty stops that intervene,
 And seizes on the spirit of the scene;
 Thus Genius by it's energy oft gains
 What slow-pac'd plodders miss with all their pains.
 And say, ELIZA, when of late you fate 471
 With moralizing JOSEPH tete-à-tete,
 In that half-struggling half-consenting scene,
 Ere you resort to the unlucky screen,
 Say, since the birth of Comedy, if one 475
 Could ever act that JOSEPH like that JOHN.

BUT there was one of more illustrious name,
 Whose smile was fortune and whose praise was fame;
 On his dark brow deliberate wisdom fate,
 And where his empire reach'd, his will was fate;
 Stern in the senate, in his social hours 481
 Gay as MARK ANTONY with TULLY's powers;
 What time by him to studious lamps were giv'n
 None knew, his genius seem'd the gift of Heav'n;
 Prone though he was to one destructive vice, 485
 When duty call'd he spurn'd th' ignoble dice;
 Of courage tried, of friendship well approv'd,
 Virtue he much admir'd, but Fame he lov'd;
 But having made false fame his hapless choice,
 He thought he heard it in the people's voice; 490
 Guardian no longer of his country's laws,
 Clamour he fed, and took it for applause;

Lur'd

Lur'd to promote ambition's factious job,
 Became the brawling mouthpiece of a mob,
 Whom when once taught the pseudo-patriot's trade,
 He quits and blushes for the fools he has made : 496
 Great in himself alone, blest if he knew
 How to select the creditable few,
 But for the bulk of dunces, whom he leads,
 Tho' nurtur'd in his garden, they are weeds ; 500
 Mere fungusses that mock the planter's toil,
 The vegetating dunghill of the soil.

HIM in your chains you held, a triumph great
 To manacle the SAMPSON of the state ;
 But inborn chastity your soul inspir'd, 505
 And that was not the virtue he admir'd ;
 Nor when you put the manly habit on
 Was that the dress in which he thought you shone ;
 So he was to his liberty restor'd,
 And, having lost your Wit, you gain'd a Lord. 510

Now let us vault o'er part of your career,
 Till on the stage of DRURY you appear,
 Where ABINGTON, her race of glory run,
 No longer now obscur'd your rising fun ;
 Here KING, an actor train'd in GARRICK's school,
 And long experience, held vicegerent rule ; 516
 He, more sagacious, with a Critic's eye
 Saw where your strength of character would lie ;
 With my SAD SISTER clos'd the ling'ring strife,
 And fix'd you in the comic cast for life. 520

And now, no longer wand'ring from its course,
 Your stream of genius found its proper force ;
 Each form reflecting as it roll'd along
 In colours bright and in resemblance strong ;
 Nor was that genius only doom'd to shed 525
 It's living honours on the senseless dead ;
 'Twas your's to heal the captive general's grief,
 And rescue the capitulating chief,
 On his dejected brow the wreath you bound,
 And rais'd his sickly HEIRESS from the ground ; 530
 So rais'd she stood—but oh ! sad tale to tell,
 Loose from your hold the mawkish minion fell,
 And falling prov'd to the convicted pit
 That your attractions mask'd his dearth of wit.
 But harder was the fate of him, who drew 535
 The model of his PARAGON from you,
 Conscious that malice had false judgment past
 On his best work, he proudly broke the cast :
 Such is the freakish palate of the town,
 Clean viands pall whilst dirty ones go down : 540
 But LADY TEAZLE deified your name,
 And e'en in SCANDAL'S SCHOOL you gather'd fame :
 Whilst gentle JERNINGHAM essay'd to climb
 Ambition's ladder in a luckless time,
 Aloft he saw your form, as thro' the glass 545
 The glazier's prentice spies his fav'rite lass,
 Unheedful of the work he is about,
 Forgetting she's within, and he without,
 Smit with her charms, his giddy brain turns round,
 And the rash youth falls thund'ring to the ground. 550
 But

But now our nobles caught the scenic rage,
 And RICHMOND rear'd an honorary stage;
 'Twas then you triumph'd, there you reign'd ador'd
 Presiding goddesses of the ducal board.
 From tawdry CENTLIVRE they took the play, 555
 And her's was then the WONDER of the day:
 But when the WONDER's heroine came in view,
 All wonder'd how she had been drill'd by you,
 And saw th' ingenious sculptress was at strife
 With her own marble, which was nearest life. 560
 Then, then your own gay lord the cork drew out
 Of his VIS COMICA, and let it spout,
 So fierce it foam'd, so rapidly it run,
 E'en DAGGER MASHE had own'd himself outdone;
 Nor should I much have wonder'd then to find, 565
 That it recall'd poor YOUNGER to your mind;
 But some will doubt if your illustrious spouse,
 Or old SIR PETER, made the merrier house,
 And think that one poor coach-horse, which you rode,
 Carried more fame than six have since bestow'd: 570
 And can you now in your meridian blaze
 See your old Mate contract his setting rays?
 Can you pass by his humble door, and think
 A kind remembrance could your greatness sink?
 Man is but man—strong was his mental power 575
 Till fortune seiz'd him in a thoughtless hour,
 Stript his brave heart of all it's comforts bare,
 Save what integrity had planted there:
 For him I drop the tear, for him, when death
 Shall launch his dart, I'll weave the fun'ral wreath, 580

On his cold grave the fairest flowrets fling,
And bid my SHERIDAN his requiem sing.

AH, Poet, early lov'd, and early lost,
Where art thou? in what whirling eddy tost?
In what gulph whelm'd? Could not that brilliant wit,
Bright as APOLLO's, find a kinder PIT 586
In your own theatre? a fuller hoard
In WESLEY's lockers than the Treas'ry board?
What have your ragged BEGUMS done for you,
That the Nine Sisters could not better do? 590
Would not Parnassus furnish fresher bays
Than puzzling WINDHAM's metaphysic maze?
What from DUNDAS's temples can you tear,
But prickles harden'd in North British air?
A trophy dearly bought, of which posscest, 595
You find it but a thistle at the best.
Turn, turn to me! of the Pierian spring
Drink yet again, and stretch your soaring wing!
Of many, ah! too many, tho' bereft,
Still has your cause some stout supporters left. 600
JORDAN, be sure, to do your Muse a grace,
Wou'd cease her LABOURS for the BRUNSWICK race,
Proud for your brow the laurel wreath to twine,
Lop off one hero from the royal line;
And she is Nature's own.—I found her such, 605
Nor marr'd the copy by a single touch,
The finish'd work such high perfection bore,
Art cou'd add nothing, Nature give no more.

AND

AND has not KEMBLE his propitious hours,
 Unparallel'd in person as in powers? 610
 A man, whose genius in extremes is cast,
 First out of fight, or out of compass last;
 One, who no terms with stage-recorders keeps,
 But soars above them, or below them creeps;
 Sooner than stem with those who make the play, 615
 He'll check his speed, and give the race away:
 As learned SERJEANT HILL your patience tries,
 With case on case, 'till haply one applies,
 So with like patience must his audience wait
 On KEMBLE, 'till he chuses to be Great, 620
 Put up with readings any thing but true,
 Cut like light guineas to be coin'd anew,
 'Till from his torpor all at once he starts
 Magnificent, and flashes on your hearts—
 From Ætna's top the prospect how sublime! 625
 But that to reach, how great the toil and time!
 From ROSCIUS to GARRICK—if you will,
 From ÆSCHYLUS to SHAKSPEAR—higher still—
 Cull the whole world of actors, man by man,
 And rival his PENRUDDOCK, if you can. 630
 What ail'd you, iron-chested bard, to write
 That libellous pert thing in peevish spite?
 Faint strokes of humour here and there if one
 Gleams, as on dunghil gleams a pebble stone,
 Ah silly fencer, you've not plac'd a hit; 635
 You should have had less malice, or more wit.

OF you to speak, great SIDDONS, I forbear,
 Above my praises, and beneath my care;
 Ere to this bulk of grandeur you were grown,
 I've heard Dame Nature boast you for her own, 640
 But Nature is driv'n out by flattery's blast,
 As fire is quell'd by puffing it too fast.
 Your voice, so tuneful once, is now become
 The leaden echo of a muffled drum;
 Now breaks upon the ear, now dies away, 645
 Like toll of distant bell in gusty day;
 Shifting by fits from this to that extreme,
 The croak of ravens, or the peacock's scream;
 While thus, as by hysteric starts, you speak,
 You might as well rehearse your part in Greek; 650
 If this is pathos, this the tragic tone,
 Nature disclaims it, it is all your own.
 HOPKINS, good dame, her cool dismissal takes,
 And wide, heav'n knows, must be the gap she makes.
 SMITH dwells at ease by old Saint Edmund's Cross,
 And leaves the echoes to bewail his loss. 656
 Oh, when he led his troops to BOSWORTH fight,
 I pitied the poor pale-fac'd scout his fright;
 One at a time, he made five RICHMOND's fall,
 Had there been five at once, he'd kill'd them all; 660
 So loud he called to horse, they heard the shout
 At Hyde Park Corner, and the grooms led out.
 How great is PACKER in the sleeping scene
 Of good old Duncan! staunch had he not been
 When SMITH so bellow'd, actor of less note 665
 Had started out of bed and sav'd his throat.

MOODY,

MOODY, altho' not number'd with the dead,
 Has struck his AUSTRIAN COLOURS, and is fled,
 BENSLEY has strutted out his scenic day,
 And put MALVOLIO on the shelf for aye. 670
 PARSONS is lost—I mourn for FORESIGHT's sake—
 And BADDELY lives only in his CAKE;
 Whilst time still threatens, falsely as I hope—
 Oh, stab to chastity!—to ravish POPE.

BUT tho' that ravisher has thin'd the band, 675
 The rest shall rally at their chief's command,
 Soon as his call convokes them to their post,
 In names and numbers no ignoble host:
 These in review, need any bard despair,
 If JORDAN serves, and BANNISTER be there? 680
 Like faithful ABDIEL, he, untaught to yield,
 Flames in the front of every well fought field,
 Whether his gay excursive course he bends,
 Past the fix'd land-marks, where my empire ends,
 To flowery wilds of fanciful romance, 685
 Where the Fauns gambol and the Fairies dance;
 Or with the firm battalion in array
 Marches wherever honour points the way,
 In every character he sets to view,
 For ever pleasing, and for ever new: 690
 And wherefore has he this peculiar art?
 Why, but because he has a feeling heart?
 And let him learn, if yet that truth's unknown,
 That pity's tender province is his own,

And

And he who doubts, if this assertion's good, 695
 Let him attend the CHILDREN IN THE WOOD;
 Let ROBIN's joy, let SHEVA's patient sigh
 A confirmation of this truth supply:
 Friend, husband, father, son—Well may he play
 These parts, which he rehearses every day. 700

AND now what means that chilling discontent,
 Which sour ill-nature is so apt to vent?
 Why that eternal wailing o'er the dead,
 As if all excellence with them had fled?
 Would they revive in these enlighten'd days 705
 FLETCHER's or MASSINGER's licentious plays?
 No, they would hoot the author from the stage,
 Who dar'd to ape the language of that age.
 Is WYCHERLEY's a drama to endure?
 Is JONSON delicate! Is SHADWELL pure? 710
 Where is the decency of CONGREVE's scene?
 The moral where of CENTLIVRE or BEHN?
 Why then extol what Satyrs scarce would bear,
 And hunt them down, whom virtue deigns to hear?
 Yet this is still the cant of that small fry, 715
 Who stun our ears with their diurnal cry:
 Not but there's much that Critics might amend,
 Full business for the censor and the friend,
 Marauders, that correction should reclaim,
 Cossacks, that forge commissions in my name, 720
 Quacks, that by magnetizing tricks provoke
 Contemptuous laughter, and then boast the stroke;
 But

But where's the Quixote, that will undertake,
 To fight these windmills for the Muse's sake,
 While their own puffers conjure up a wind, 725
 That fills their wallets with the meal they grind?
 Reform your poets!—No, reform your pit,
 The dunces, that take mummery for wit;
 Reform your gallery-roarers, that in place
 Of genuine nature bellow for grimace, 730
 Those asinine applauders, for whose praise
 FARLEY composes, and BOLOGNA plays;
 For such an audience let GRIMALDI write,
 And LEWIS sink a genius, once my right.
 Not at your authors rail, ye critic elves, 735
 Rail at your own vile taste, and mend yourselves.
 Room for the Dancers!—PARISOT appears,
 Lift up your eyes, and crouch your asses ears!
 Is this the Muse's temple, this the shrine,
 Which SHAKSPEAR hallow'd with his strains divine?
 This is invasion prefac'd by a dance, 741
 A revolution dictated in France,
 Who, ere she ventures open war to wage,
 Affassinates the genius of your stage;
 As pilfering knaves before they rob a shop 745
 Silence the house dog with a poison'd sop,
 Britons, defenders of your fame, arise!
 Can you behold these scenes with stedfast eyes?
 Unblushing can you join the rabble's shout, 749
 While the sham'd actor bawls his nonsense out?
 And you, dread Sire, your sheltering grace extend,
 Your People's father, be the Muse's friend!

Before

Before your throne two suppliant sisters stand,
 Both need your aid, both ask your fost'ring hand,
 Ardent alike their duty to approve, 755
 Why shou'd the younger thus engross your love?
 Say, shall the lavish chief of DRURY-LANE
 Weave the proud canopy, but weave in vain?
 Shall crowns and trophies rich in gold emboss'd
 To worms and moths despondingly be tost? 760
 Patron of arts, your pardon can I need,
 If to your clemency for him I plead,
 Who, in the brightest period of your reign,
 Rear'd to the British Muse a splendid fane,
 And there inscrib'd a record of his fame, 765
 That shall to distant ages waft his name?

SINCE the first plank on DRURY'S Stage was spread
 Let SALISBURY say, or cause it to be said,
 If one mob-word, one democratic joke,
 Has mov'd his pen to damn it with a stroke; 770
 Poet and wit himself, yet be it known,
 No grace by him to wicked wits is shewn,
 He pardons no man's joke, nor rashly risks his own.

AND you, ELIZA, who 'midst courtly scenes
 Hold commerce now with real Kings and Queens,
 You, let me hope, some happy hour will chuse,
 When Majesty unbends, to serve the Muse,
 Set her unshaken loyalty to view,
 And speak for one, who oft has spoke in you,

Atone the Fates, avert Old Drury's shame, 780
 And save the ancient temple of your fame;
 So, if no crime has drawn this vengeance down,
 She may divide the favour of the Crown;
 She loads your bounty with no weighty task,
 But HALF A CROWN, is no great boon to ask.
 That grace conceded to your friendly Stage, 786
 You will but pay her, as you paid your PAGE.

AND now no longer mine, but Fortune's child,
 Beware, ELIZA, how you are beguil'd
 By that blind mother, that deceitful dame, 790
 Who gives you titles, but can't give you fame.
 Pride is a self-tormentor at the best;
 Humility can never be deprest,
 Sweet is her sleep, pride tosses ill at ease, 794
 Like SHENSTONE's shepherd in his swarm of bees,
 Who, as they murmur'd round him on the wing,
 Slept sound indeed, if he ne'er felt them sting:
 Ingratitude will bring the loftiest low,
 And scorn becomes not e'en the monarch's brow,
 But when soft eyes assume the haughty stare, 800
 Farewel the Cupids, that were ambush'd there!
 Guard then the station that you owe to me,
 Launch'd from my port you tempt a treach'rous sea;
 New dangers with new dignities commence, 804
 Your sock thrown off, you quit your best defence:
 I gave the sceptre, which you now resign;
 I was in your pow'r once, now you're in mine:

A Muse insulted is not apt to spare,
 Lifted to Fortune's slippery height, beware!
 Whilst the low shrub is shelter'd from the stroke,
 Th' indignant gale tears up the lordly oak. 811

FINIS.

